

Rock Raiders

PSX Version

Testing 12/08/99

First of all let me say that Rock Raiders is great. I really enjoy the vehicles and blasting rock. The PC version is fantastic!

The following comments vary from personal points of concern that may be minor tweaks and other suggestions that are less practical person so you can slap me for those.

Red ink italic notes are points that seem most important to me.

LEVEL 1 - Easy

Timer seemed really tight. The player should have loads of time to play and explore in level 1. As much as 8 minutes may be best here.

The general difficult ramping of level 1 seemed too steep. Suddenly a spider was on me and then suddenly 3 were. This could be resolved by removing a spider or placing scorpions (non-firing ones) in their place, as they seem to move slower.

The first jump felt quite tough as the landing areas was only single block. However, I understand that the gem here is a bonus one so maybe this is less crucial.

Looks odd that spiders have no collision with each other. At one point I had 3 running on top of each other.

LEVEL 2 - Waterways

Seemed too hard all of a sudden. Maybe it would be better if the scorpions did not fire and there or the frequency or monsters were reduced.

The timer was too short after several plays I was still never getting out in time. Maybe an additional 1-minute would be best making it a 5 minute level.

In the narrow pathways of water I found that it was quite easy to get stuff with the boat, This may not be too bad a problem as I got better at controlling it after a few tries.

LEVEL 3 – Rescue Mission

This level played really well. The timer was okay and the general difficulty ranking was not bad. It actually felt easier than level 2.

It was good to get a graphical change. Perhaps this should be swapped with level 2?

SOUND

General comment on sound levels is that music is far too dominant. It may also be good if certain effects were also beefed up. The coolest feature in the game is drilling and the drill explosion is spectacular so a suitable meaty sound effect is need so that the player can feel

like they are real hard cases.

Vehicle sound missing.

It would be good if the vehicles had two looping fx each. 1 for ticking over and 1 for moving. This would be helpful for landing, because sometimes I tried to get out of vehicle when it was still moving slightly. Maybe I am just dumb.

Sound fx for vehicle collision was out of synch sometimes.

GENERAL

To begin with I found the jump a bit tricky to use. I did not realise until told that it worked on a charge up.

A suggestion that there is likely to be no time to implement is the addition of a tutorial aspect to level 1. Text boxes could pop up and explain the jump, vehicle and other basic elements and controls of game to help the player grasp the controls and the game world. I never assume that anyone bothers to ready the manuals.

For example. 'Use X to jump. Your pack will need to recharge ever time you do this.'

It would be great to have an indicator of when you have reached a mission objective, such as collected enough green crystals. Ideally a sound effect would be best or a flashing icon or on screen message.

Generally I feel that the interface would benefit from some more sound effects. A sound to signify a charged jet pack for example. Also specific pick up noises for types of pick up would be good to enable the player to recognise pick up type by sound AND picture.

On level 2 when I was killed I had just fired a weapon (the swirling blue one). A sprite from this effect appeared on top of the failed mission window and popped up on screen.

A suggestion for the main screens. The player characters seem rather lifeless on the selection screen and password screen. A little effect to add life would be a blink for them. This could be a minor 1-frame artwork addition but of course there is unlikely to be time to implement.

I realise that many of these comments are not feasible at this stage. So please do not hate me.